

Contributions

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.



REV. JOHN HENRY KNEPPER.

The subject of this sketch is well known, not only in Somerset county, but thru-out the Brethren church at large. Many people who see the above likeness will say, "Why that's Johnnie Knepper of Pennsylvania!" as he is familiarly called by his friends and brethren from Maryland and California.

Rev. Knepper was born in Brothers Valley township, Somerset county, Pa., on October 25, 1849. His parents and grand-parents on both sides were "Pennsylvania Dutch." His father, Rev. Solomon Knepper, deceased, was the pioneer English preacher in the German Baptist church among the home talent in Somerset county. He died in 1854, when John H. was but five years old. After finishing his education as far as he could in the public schools of the township, the subject of our sketch attended the normal and select schools of Berlin in the summer and taught in the public schools in the winter. Shortly after the Berlin Railroad was completed he was appointed manager of the same, which position he held till the B. & O. R. R. company became the owners of the road, and that company continued him in their employ as conductor or agent until he resigned.

After following the several occupations of photographer, railroad conductor and traveling salesman, he was called to the ministry on the first day of January, 1881, under the old system in the Tunker church, by election without nomination, and was installed into the work whereunto he had been called. He was advanced to the second degree Feb. 22, 1882, and was ordained to the eldership July 3, 1887. He accepted the call to the ministry with some reluctance, and entered upon his duties with many doubts and misgivings as to his capabilities for the high calling. But after he had once settled down to the work he went about his Master's business with a will that at once assured success, and few men have grown in favor with God and man more rapidly than has Brother Knepper. It can hardly be said of him that "A prophet hath no honor in his own country." Nor is

his reputation confined to his rural home, for he filled the pulpit of the Johnstown church, which is one of the best in the Brethren church in the state.

In this new calling he met the approval of his brethren to the degree that in a few years the Berlin, Pa., charge, comprising three congregations, demanded his full ordination as elder of the charge. After serving the charge for seven years he of his own will severed this relation to accept a call to the Somerset Street Brethren church, of Johnstown, Pa. After a very pleasant pastorate of three years in the "Flood City" he again, at the earnest solicitation of his old charge, returned to Berlin. He accepted the pastorate of the Meyersdale, Pa., church in April, 1898, and is yet the pastor of that charge.

Rev. Knepper was moderator of the Pennsylvania State Conference five times. He was vice moderator of the National Conference in 1887 at Ashland, Ohio, and again in 1894 at the same place, and in 1899 was elected moderator of our National Conference held at Winona Park, Indiana, which office he now holds.

Elder Knepper is a self-made man in the full sense of the term. His father, Solomon Knepper, was also a minister, and a man of more than ordinary intelligence in his day, but he died when John was but a child, who was left to the care of his mother. By diligent application to his studies he was enabled to teach two terms of school, to the entire satisfaction of patrons and pupils, before he had reached his eighteenth year.

In the split that came into the church in 1881 we naturally find Elder Knepper among the Brethren or "Progressive" part of the "Dunkard" family. Few men as young as Rev. Knepper have risen as high in their chosen denomination.

In 1869 he married Miss Emma J. Brubaker, second daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Herman W. Brubaker, of Berlin, Pa., who has always been a noble "help meet" in all his work and is a woman of lovely character. Five children bless their union: Clara, now Mrs. W. A. Summersgill, and Harry B., of Johnstown; Eva, deceased; Edna G., at home, and Mary A., a very beautiful child whose lamented death occurred not two years since.

Rev. Knepper's favorable standing and happy position are due solely to his own worth. In the communities where he has served, he has been always an honored and loved pastor and one having "a good report of them which are without" as well as those in the church.

BECAUSE OF SINNING

C. H. WETHERBE

I think that one particular purpose for the giving of the history of the Israelites in the Bible is that of presenting to all people, during all the ages following the making of the Bible, an array of impressive examples, showing that in his own ways God brought judgments upon people for their continued

and unrepented sinning. Thru-out the Old Testament we frequently see the statement that the reason why the enemies of the Israelites won victories over them and despoiled their possessions, and sometimes carried them away into captivity, was because they had sinned. And it was God who wrought thru the armies which attacked the sinning Israelites. We see one example of this fact in the case of Rehoboam and his people, as follows: "And it came to pass in the fifth year of King Rehoboam that Shishah, king of Egypt, came up against Jerusalem, because they had trespassed against the Lord." That is, that part of the Israelites that were under King Rehoboam, whose throne was in Jerusalem; it was because those people, under the lead of Rehoboam, had transgressed the law of God, not merely a few times, but continually for years, that God moved upon and worked thru the king of Egypt, so that the sinning ones were punished and humbled.

Just preceding the words which I quoted we read that Rehoboam "forsook the law of the Lord, and all Israel with him." They went headlong and stubbornly into idolatry, and possibly they fancied that they were secure from being deprived of their place and possessions; for wicked people become so blind by sin and so bold by their seeming successes that they make themselves believe that nothing can rout them from their position. It is just so today. Thousands continue boldly in their career of wickedness, believing that they are secure in their positions and possessions, but they are not. They need to be often reminded that there is an Almighty God who still can use agencies for the demolishing of their property and for the defeat of their plans. God surprisingly uses men and means for the punishment of evil doers. Beware of his power!

THE INVISIBLE CHRIST

REV. A. C. DIXON

From the birth in Bethlehem to the ascension from Olivet the world had a visible Christ. John says that he saw him with his eyes and handled him. The men in white announced to the disciples, as they gazed upward, that this same visible Christ would so come in like manner as they had seen him go up.

Between the visible going up and the visible coming down he will be present on earth, for he has said, "Lo, I am with you alway." "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." The real presence is with every true church. The invisible Christ abides with his people.

The "Acts of the Apostles" may be translated "The Acts of Jesus."

Luke, in his Gospel, wrote only of "what Jesus began both to do and to teach until the day in which he was taken up." In the "Acts of the Apostles" he continues to record the doings and teachings of Jesus. Our Lord, tho invisible, is still showing himself "alive by many infallible proofs."

There is no change of method. The in-